

NORTH CAROLINA STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE
Office of Archives and History
Department of Cultural Resources

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Craig Farmstead

Gastonia vicinity, Gaston County, GS0320, Listed 4/19/2006

Nomination by Davyd Foard Hood

Photographs by Ann Swallow, 2005



Façade view



Log and frame barns

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of property

historic name Craig Farmstead

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 118 CRaigland Lane not for publication N/A
city or town Gastonia vicinity N/A
state North Carolina code NC county Gaston code 071 zip code 28056

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination
_____ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic
Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property
xx meets _____ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant
_____ nationally _____ statewide xx locally. (_____ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official Date

North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property _____ meets _____ does not meet the National Register criteria. (_____ See continuation sheet for additional
comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

_____ entered in the National Register

_____ See continuation sheet.

_____ determined eligible for the
National Register

_____ See continuation sheet.

_____ determined not eligible for the
National Register

_____ removed from the National Register

_____ other (explain): _____

Craig Farmstead
Name of Property

Gaston County, North Carolina
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

☒ private
☐ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

__xx building(s)
 ____ district
 ____ site
 ____ structure
 ____ object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>6</u>	<u>2</u>	buildings
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>8</u>	<u>4</u>	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)
N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register
N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: DOMESTIC	Sub: single dwelling
DOMESTIC	secondary structure
AGRICULTURE	animal facility
AGRICULTURE	storage
AGRICULTURE	agriculture field

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>VACANT</u>	Sub: <u>NOT IN USE</u>
<u>AGRICULTURE</u>	<u>agricultural field</u>

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Italianate
Other: single-pen log barn
Other: double-pen barn
Other: double-pen crib

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation	<u>Brick</u>
roof	<u>Metal</u>
walls	<u>Wood</u>
	<u>Aluminum</u>
other	<u>Brick</u>
	<u>Wood</u>

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

See Continuation Sheet

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Name of Property

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

☐ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

☐ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

☒ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

☐ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

☐ A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

☐ B removed from its original location.

☐ C a birthplace or a grave.

☐ D a cemetery.

☐ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

☐ F a commemorative property.

☐ G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

ca. 1852-ca. 1910

Significant Dates

1852

1886

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder Stowe, Lawson Henderson--builder

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.

☐ previously listed in the National Register

☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register

☐ designated a National Historic Landmark

☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____

☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data

☒ State Historic Preservation Office

☐ Other State agency

☐ Federal agency

☐ Local government

☐ University

☐ Other

Name of repository: North Carolina Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina

Gaston County, North Carolina
County and State

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Craig Farmstead
Gaston County, North Carolina

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

Overview and Farmstead Landscape

ca. 1852--

Contributing site

The Craig Farmstead, a complex of nineteenth- and early-twentieth century domestic and agricultural buildings occupying a tract of 19.20 acres, is located in the semi-rural landscape of southeastern Gaston County. This area, with its gently rolling topography, was agricultural in appearance and character until the last decades of the twentieth century when suburban development gradually inched south from Gastonia and began claiming former fields, pastures, and woodlands for new construction. The Craig Farmstead is located about eleven miles southeast of the Gaston County Courthouse in central Gastonia. About three-quarters of this distance is developed. The farmstead, dating to 1852 and successively reduced by estate settlements in 1920 and 1967, is a generally rectangular tract on the south side of the Union-New Hope Road (SR 2435). While defined by the road on its northwest side, its setting has been effectively protected by family-held lands on the northwest, northeast, and southeast sides. The Craig Farmstead enjoys a further advantage in that the farm seat (#1) and the other buildings (#2-11) are located in a cluster at the near center of the acreage, at the end of CRAigland Lane leading south from Union-New Hope Road and surrounded by its own woodlands and fenced pastures. (The Craigs capitalize the "R" in Craig to denote Mrs. Craig's Ratchford ancestry. They named the lane.)

This domestic and agricultural complex, functional in both its arrangement of buildings and their character, occupies grass-covered grounds, including the lawn, the fenced barnyard, and pasture. All the buildings (#1-7, 9) here are of frame construction and sheathed with weatherboards except for a barn (#8) that incorporates both log and frame construction, and two small sheds (#10-11) erected in the pasture in 2000. In about 1966 the weatherboarding on the William Newton Craig house (#1) was covered with aluminum siding. Within this group only the William Newton Craig House (#1) is painted; the other buildings are sheathed with weathered, unpainted boards. The farm seat (#1) stands apart in a tree-shaded lawn. The only visible organizational feature is a simple path-like lane, possibly part of an older road, which carries between the William Moore Craig House (#2), the earliest residence here, and the farm's earliest known barn (#8). A second barn (#7) and a poultry house (#6) are aligned on the south side of this lane while the meat/well-house (#5) and the corn crib (#9) stand on its north side. A poultry house (#3) and the privy (#4) are located south of the antebellum Craig residence.

In addition to the grounds that serve as the site and the immediate setting of the house and its outbuildings, the landscape of the nominated acreage includes woodlands, open pasture, traces of

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the nineteenth-century road that preceded the ca. 1924-1926 Union-New Hope Road (SR 2435), the ca. 1926 entrance drive (now known as CRAigland Lane), and the stone remains of two later-nineteenth century buildings. Mostly deciduous woodlands, in the form of a reverse “L,” cover about three-fourths of the generally rectangular 19.20-acre property. The house grounds occupy the inner angle of the reverse “L” while pasture covers the remaining northwest quarter of the nominated acreage. The ca. 1926 entrance drive carries on a nearly true north/south axis from Union-New Hope Road south to the front of the house. It is flanked on each side by volunteer growth along fence lines that enclose the unequal-sized pastures on either side. The faint path of a nineteenth-century road enters the acreage from the west and carries easterly at the south edge of the larger, west pasture. As it approaches the house, on axis, it forks into a “Y”. The lesser right fork continues to the east as the informal lane linking the houses with the barns and barnyard. The left fork, which is the actual continuation of the road, whose outline is faint and integrated into lawn and pasture, carries on the north side of the house, across the entrance drive. Here on the east edge of the drive it carries easterly with a fence line to the woodland edge, past the site of the blacksmith shop, and then north to Union-New Hope Road. The stone base of the forge and other scattered stones mark the site of the long-lost log blacksmith shop. The even fainter, long abandoned path of a lesser road carries north from the barnyard through the woodland and then in a northeasterly direction out of the nominated acreage. The site of a one-story frame tenant house, which stood on the south edge of this road, is today marked by stone piers, simple, low stacks of stone, and the remains of sills that survived a fire on 10 September 1960 that destroyed the house and claimed the lives of Arthonia and Doshia (Bailey) Stowe.

1. William Newton Craig House
1886
Contributing building

Erected by Lawson Henderson Stowe, a local Gaston County house-builder, this bracketed Italianate-style two-story, single-pile weatherboarded frame house was home to four generations of the Craig family between its completion, late in 1886 or early 1887, and 1998 when William Newton Craig’s granddaughter, the last family resident, relocated to an assisted living facility. During this period of just over 110 years—and since—the house, whose two-story rear ell occupies the south half of the house’s front block, has survived remarkably intact and well-preserved except for the brick foundation underpinning of 1951, the enclosure of a bathroom on the first-story service porch in 1942, and the addition of aluminum siding over its original weatherboards and plain-board window frames in about 1966. The two-story L-plan frame house stands on hewn stone piers with brick infill and is covered with side- and end-gable roofs of 5-V sheet metal. It is now owned and maintained by William Neely Craig, a brother of the last occupant, and his wife, Wilma Ratchford Craig, who reside in a nearby house.

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The construction of the house is recorded in two contemporary documents which survive in the possession of the current owners. "Mr. W. N. Craigs Bill of Lumber," dated 7 August 1886, lists the sills, corner posts, sleepers, rafters, joists, plank, flooring, ceiling, weatherboards, sheeting, and "16 colums" necessary to build the house. Ten of the columns were used on the front porch and six on the back porch. The second period document is an undated invoice from the Gastonia firm of Brumfield, Bradley & Company which identifies itself as "Manufacturers of Doors, Sash, Blinds, Brackets, Moulding, Stair-Railing, Newel-Posts, Balusters, Etc." This invoice includes fourteen doors, twenty windows in two sizes, twenty pair of corresponding blinds, a smaller window for the pantry, both turned and sawn balusters for the front and rear porches, respectively, three types of brackets for the porches and eaves, and a "front door" costing \$6.50. All of these functional and decorative items remain in place on the house save a few replacement balusters and the blinds which were removed before 1930.

The handsome decorative Italianate finish of the house is concentrated on the porches and eaves, and this rich bracketed character is especially impressive on its west facing façade. The first-story bays of the symmetrical three-bay elevation are sheltered by a hipped roof one-story porch which, characteristically, stops short of occupying the full façade. The two corners are supported by a trio of chamfered posts while paired columns flank the opening in front of the door. Here later poured concrete steps descend to ground level. The columns are linked by a railing composed of the turned balusters. The tops of the columns are enhanced with two types of sawn brackets of complementing character with the smaller brackets linking the columns to the porch soffits while the larger ones rise from the columns to the molded eaves of the porch. The porch has a wood floor and a ceiling of beaded tongue-and-groove ceiling added over the original flush sheathing in 2001. A molded Italianate architrave enframes the doorway which is fitted with the \$6.50 door featuring paired molded wood panels below molded arch-headed vertical openings fitted with decorative frosted glass. The window openings to either side and the three on the second story hold six-over-six sash windows. At the top of the elevation the molded, projecting eaves are fitted with brackets paired above each window, another pair at each corner, and a single bracket at the edge of the returns on each gable end.

The north and south gable ends of the main block are essentially identical in appearance except that the north chimney rises from a shallow base while the south chimney shaft has no visible base. The bricks of both chimneys are laid in a one-to-five common bond and finish with stepped shoulders and plain caps. Each is flanked by window openings at each level. The south elevation of the two-story rear ell is shallowly inset and has a symmetrical two-bay arrangement reflecting the two interior rooms. The bays contain windows with six-over-six sash except for the east first-story bay which contains a door opening onto cast-concrete steps. The replacement glazed six-pane and paneled door dates to about 1942. The eaves of the ell are finished in the same fashion as those on the main block, and they return on the east gable end of the ell which has a single window on each level.

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The north elevation of the ell and the visible east elevation of the main block are occupied by an inset one-story L-shaped hipped roof porch which supports an enclosed extension of the stair hall on the second-story (to accommodate the head of the stair) and a shallow inset second story porch which is the only means of access to the ell bedrooms. The porch on both levels is supported by bracketed chamfered posts which are linked by sawn balusters with a vase-shaped profile. Steps at the north end of the porch, inset beside the northeast corner of the main block, rise to the porch where doors open into the first-story stair hall, the dining room in the west end of the ell, and the bathroom. The bathroom was enclosed on the porch in 1942, beside the original pantry which formed the enclosed east end of the porch. The pantry is fitted with a four-over-four sash window on its east side while the bathroom has a small window on its north wall. On the second story a door opens from the stair hall onto the porch where two doors open respectively into the two bedrooms above the kitchen and dining room.

The well-preserved interior of the William Newton Craig House follows a center, stair hall plan and has a generally consistent finish on both stories. This includes pine flooring, brick hearths, tall baseboards, plaster walls, sheathed flush board ceilings, simple cornice moldings, and mostly four-panel doors set in plain board surrounds. The only appreciable variation room to room is in the appearance of the series of eight Italianate mantels at the house's eight fireplaces.

The front door opens into the stair hall where a handsome staircase rises along the hall's south wall in a single flight to the east and the second story. The shaped handrail carries turned balusters from a robust, well-proportioned turned newel at the foot of the stair. The step ends are finished with scroll-decorated brackets, and the closet under the stair is fitted with a two-panel door. On the hall's north wall a coat rail is inset in the plaster on either side of the door opening into the parlor. The mantel in the north parlor, one of the most elaborate in the house, has chamfered and molded pilasters supporting paneled pilasters at each end of the frieze which has a half-circle center feature and complementing applied decoration. The thickish shallow shelf has rounded corners. A hanging lamp in this room, with a white glass Art Deco globe, appears to date to the 1940s. At the foot of the stairs a door in the hall's south wall opens into a room that was long used as a first story bedroom. The wallpaper here was installed in 2000 when a made-for-television movie was filmed on the farmstead. The room's mantel has chamfered pilasters, decorated with tall bosses, and a deep frieze with five symmetrical lozenge-shaped cutouts. A door in the bedroom's east wall opens into the west room of the ell, traditionally the dining room, that also served as a family sitting room. It has printed sheet vinyl laid over the pine floors, painted wallboard on the walls, and celotex panels over the flush board ceiling. The mantel, centered on its east wall, is flanked on the south by a two-panel door opening into a closet beside the interior chimney, and a door on the north side communicating with the kitchen. This mantel also has chamfered pilasters with tall applied bosses that rise to a frieze board with a shaped bottom. The mantel in the adjoining kitchen is very similar in design but plainer and without bosses on its chamfered pilasters. The door opening into the pantry has long since been

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removed; however, the second doorway in the room's north wall, originally opening onto the service porch, holds a four-panel door that now opens into the bathroom. The finish of the bathroom is conventional. The pantry shelving is early if not original. The architrave on the small window in its rear wall retains its simple Greek-Revival-style backband. The walls in the kitchen are sheathed with painted flush boards installed in about 1938. A ceiling-mounted flue opening, in the area above the mantel, served the iron cookstove.

The second story of the house contains four bedrooms. Doors in the north and south sides of the spacious hall open into bedrooms whose mantels are variants of the one in the dining/sitting room. Neither room in the main block has a closet. A door at the east end of the stair hall opens onto the second-story porch where doorways fitted with both screened doors and four-panel doors open into the two bedrooms in the ell which do not communicate with the main block or each other. The Italianate mantels in these bedrooms are similar to those elsewhere in the house and have boss-enriched pilasters and shaped bottom frieze boards. The enclosed areas on either side of the interior chimney provide closets to each bedroom which are fitted with two-panel doors.

2. William Moore Craig House
ca. 1852
Contributing building

This modest one-story, single pile, two-room hewn- and sawn-frame house was probably built by William Moore Craig following his purchase of a tract of 222 acres from the estate of Jacob Rhyne in August 1852. According to family tradition the side-gable roof house originally stood some distance to the north of its present location, closer to the 1886 house, and was moved to its present location after that house was completed and occupied by the family. The original orientation of the house remains unconfirmed as does the matter of its relationship to a long-lost kitchen block and whether the house might have had an ell that was not moved. When relocated to its present site, with its long "front" elevation facing north, it was placed on a combination of stones and stone piers. These supports were supplemented later with concrete blocks.

Either then or later most, if not all, of its weatherboarding was replaced and window openings on its east, south, and west sides were sheathed over. The house is believed to have been used as a domestic outbuilding in the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and by the mid-twentieth century a grain bin had been created along the south side (rear) of the west room. It is now used for miscellaneous storage.

The deteriorated rectangular, two-room house is sheathed with weathered, unpainted replacement weatherboards and a side gable roof of 5-V sheet metal. The roof was painted in 2005. Boxed eaves carry across the north and south elevations while the east and west gable ends are flush.

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Two simply-framed doorways are symmetrically positioned on the façade, near the center of the elevation, and open into two equally sized rooms. The door is lost from the west doorway while the four-panel door formerly occupying the east doorway is preserved inside the house. On the east gable end the window opening on the north side of the fireplace remains visible while its pendant opening on the south was weatherboarded over. The west gable end is now blind, but traces of two original windows are visible on the interior. The house's south elevation is blind except for a doorway, on axis with the front door, opening into the east room. A tall full-width shed was added in the twentieth century across the south elevation for equipment storage. It has deteriorated as has a later shed-roof extension along the earlier shed's south side.

The two-room-plan interior generally retains its original appearance and finish; however, the window openings have lost all their sash. The walls and ceilings of both rooms are flush sheathed with unpainted, now mellowed pine boards. The east room retains a wide simple post-and-lintel mantel, originally painted black, that spanned the large firebox. The window openings on either side of the mantel have plain broad surrounds set flush in that wall. The architraves framing the front and back doors and the doorway in the house's partition wall have plain boards overlaid with molded Greek-Revival-style backbands. The door linking the two rooms has a typical Greek Revival two-panel design. The door and window architraves in the west chamber are plain boards set flush in the walls. Here the opening for a conventional-sized firebox in the center of the west wall is sheathed over as is the window opening on its south side and an opening centered in the room's south side. The opening on the north side of the closed fireplace is only covered by weatherboards. The floors in both rooms are generally intact except for some loss at the two front doors.

3. Poultry House
ca. 1951
Noncontributing building

This deteriorated frame building was erected to house laying hens for the Craigs' egg production and sales operation, which they continued to about 1967. The building was afterward used for agricultural and equipment storage. The rectangular gable-front building, now partially collapsed, retains portions of sheathing on its elevations and its 5-V sheet metal roof. The interior, essentially one large space except for a small pen in the southeast corner, has a dirt floor.

4. Privy
ca. 1900-1910
Contributing building

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This small almost square weatherboarded frame building served as the family privy from the time of its construction until 1942, when the first indoor bathroom was enclosed beside the pantry on the first-story service porch. Thereafter the building was used in a secondary fashion for a time by those working outdoors and on the farm. The unpainted building is covered with a shed roof of 5-V sheet metal. A board-and-rail door is centered on the north-facing front elevation while diamond-shaped vents occur on the side elevations; the rear elevation is blind. The interior has a wood floor and an enclosed bench along the south side which is fitted with two openings.

5. Meat/well-house
 ca. 1900-1910
 Contributing building

This rectangular frame one-story building probably was erected in the early-twentieth century as a combination meat house and well shed. In its original form the east half of the building, housing the meat house for salt-cured meats, was enclosed and sheathed with weatherboards while the west half was an open shed, covering the well. The entire building, then as now, was covered with a front gable roof of 5-V sheet metal. Sometime after construction, presumably when an electrically-operated pump was installed, the shed was enclosed with German siding as a pump house. Now, access to the interior is by a board-and-rail door on the south side, which opens into the pump house; a board-and-rail door, in what was the original west front of the meat house and is now a partition wall between the two enclosed chambers, opens into the meat house.

6. Poultry House
 ca. 1953
 Noncontributing building

This rudimentary rectangular frame building is the second of two such buildings erected in the early 1950s to house laying hens for the Craigs' egg production and sales operation. In its original form it had vented horizontal sheathing on all four sides, a dirt floor, and a front-gable roof of 5-V metal. The now-deteriorated building was used for egg production until about 1967. Thereafter it was used for agricultural and equipment storage with the sheathing on its south end removed to provide access for machinery.

7. Barn
 ca. 1890-1910
 Contributing building

This deteriorated rectangular center-passage frame barn is sheathed with unpainted weatherboards and covered by a side-gable roof of 5-V sheet metal. It stands on low stone stacks. Except for the center passage, which is open on both ground and loft levels on its north, front,

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and south sides, the elevations are blind. The equal-size pens on either side of the passage are each partitioned as two stables with board-and-rail doors opening into each stable. The interior walls of the stables, along the east and west sides of the passage, are sheathed with vented horizontal boards. These vented spaces also function as a ladder to provide access to the loft which is floored for the storage of hay, straw, and fodder.

8. Barn
ca. 1852-1860; 2005
Contributing building

The fabric and appearance of this building reflects two periods of construction, the latter of which is now ongoing. The core of the present building is the rectangular log pen, measuring about seventeen by twenty-one feet, which served as the floored substructure of a combination log and frame barn that was the earliest known agricultural building on the farmstead. This log pen, laid up in half-dovetail joints, occupied the center of the weatherboarded building, and it supported a frame superstructure which incorporated tall peripheral frame sheds that fully surrounded the log pen. These sheds included open shelter on the north front, and stalls and stables on the other three sides. The barn was covered with a side-gable roof of sheet metal.

In the later twentieth century the frame sheds deteriorated and became unstable. In May 2005 the entire frame portion of the barn was removed, leaving the log pen whose floor was also removed. The log pen was then stabilized and deteriorated logs replaced by either white or red oak logs. Cut-ins on the elevations of the log pen, made to enable feeding from the pen to the stalls and stables, were reinforced with upright braces. The board-and-rail door was reinstalled in its original centered opening in the north front of the pen. The log block is covered with a side-gable roof of sheet metal and its gable ends are sheathed with weatherboards salvaged from the original building. The log pen is now encircled with peripheral sheds supported on reused creosote poles. The sheds are covered by a hip perimeter roof of sheet metal that is set below and separate from the side-gable roof. Allen J. Reese is the carpenter-builder for the 2005 project. The east edge of the barnyard is retained by a low unmortared stone wall that dates to the nineteenth century.

9. Corn Crib
ca. 1900-1910
Contributing structure

This center-passage, double-pen frame corn crib is the best preserved of the agricultural outbuildings at the Craig Farmstead. It was built on stone piers; however, through time some of these have been replaced with unmortared brick and concrete block stacks. The gable-front building is covered with 5-V sheet metal. The center passage has a north/south axis and a dirt

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floor. The exterior elevations of the crib are sheathed with unpainted weatherboards. On the south side, facing the log barn, side-hinged board-and-rail doors are centered in the walls of each pen of the crib and in the upper gable where it provides access to the loft. On the north elevation a like door is located only in the wall of the east pen. The inner walls of each pen, parallel with the passage, are sheathed with vented horizontal boards. At the top of both these vented walls are long horizontal openings, fitted with bottom-hinged single-board flaps, which allow for unloading corn as each pen fills up, from the passage.

10. Shed
2000
Noncontributing structure

This simple frame open-sided shed was built by Brick Maker, Incorporated, a movie studio company, in 2000 for use when filming "The Last Brickmaker in America." Standing in the open pasture, the shed has a dirt floor, simple uprights, and a metal gable roof.

11. Shed
2000
Noncontributing structure

This simple frame shed also was built by Brick Maker, Incorporated, in 2000 for use in filming "The Last Brickmaker in America." The shed has a dirt floor, simple uprights, and a sheet metal hip roof. Rectangular in plan, and standing in the edge of a woodland, the shed is open on its north side, facing the pasture, and has spaced boards carrying between the uprights on its east, south, and west sides.

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SUMMARY

The Craig Farmstead, located in southeastern Gaston County about one and seven-eighths miles north of the North Carolina/South Carolina border and comprising eight historic resources, holds local significance in the area of architecture. The farmstead, established here in 1852 by William Moore Craig (1805-1874) with his purchase of 222 acres from the Jacob Rhyne estate, was expanded by his son William Newton Craig (1848-1919) to more than 450 acres. In the division of his estate in 1920, the core farm acreage, a tract of 141.20 acres including these buildings, was set apart to Mr. Craig's widow and his youngest son Ralph Ray Craig (1889-1965). In 1967, during his estate settlement, these buildings were set apart on a residual tract, then defined as 20.02 acres, and conveyed to his eldest child, a daughter Mary Wilson Craig (1927-2000), the last resident owner of a farmstead that had been home to four generations of the Craig family. This residual tract, recalculated to 19.20 acres and now the property of her siblings and their spouses, is the nominated acreage and includes house grounds, pasture, and woodland.

The Craig Farmstead is locally significant for its architecture under Criterion C. The architectural significance of the farmstead is twofold and reflects a period of significance from ca. 1852 to ca. 1910. During this period, the family erected two successive family residences, in about 1852 and 1886, respectively, a combination log-and-frame barn, a frame center-passage barn, a frame corn crib, a privy, and a meat/well-house which survive. The log-and-frame barn is believed to date to the first years of the Craigs's ownership of the farmstead, 1852- ca. 1860, while the other outbuildings date to ca. 1890-1910. The standing buildings comprise an important and now rare surviving farmstead in a county which experienced the most intensive development of the textile industry of any in North Carolina and the simultaneous loss of many buildings and farms associated with its earlier agrarian society. The family's second house, an Italianate-style two-story farmhouse, is an important, intact, and well-preserved example of the work of local builder Lawson Henderson Stowe (1848-1922), who excelled in grafting the bracketed Italianate style onto the traditional North Carolina farmhouse for his friends and neighbors in South Point Township and later built residences for textile executives, including DeLambert Pinckney Stowe and Abel Caleb Lineberger, in Belmont.

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HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The construction of the William Moore Craig House (#2) in about 1852 and the 1886 building of a handsome Italianate-style house (#1) for his son William Newton Craig followed on the long presence of the Craig family in the Bethel Presbyterian Church community.¹ Since the late Colonial period, various members of the extended Craig family had occupied farms in this larger area embracing today's Gaston, Lincoln, and Mecklenburg counties, North Carolina, and York County, South Carolina; however, the first now documented lineal ancestor of William Craig was Henry Craig (1729-1807) who occupied lands on Crowder's Creek in present-day upper York County, South Carolina.² At death his body was buried at Bethel Church. In his will he bequeathed eight named slaves to his widow and children including his son James Craig who was named executor.³ Mary Craig, his widow, was to have the use of the home plantation during her life and afterwards it was to be the property of his eldest surviving son John Craig (b. 1771). James Craig, the second son, was apparently already settled on lands acquired from his father or through other means. James Craig (1772-1857) married Mary McKnight (1774-1852) in 1794, and between 1797 and 1821 they became the parents of eleven known children. William Moore Craig (1805-1874), the third of six sons, was born on 18 September 1805. He appears to have been named in honor of William Moore Sr. (d. 1843), a successful planter and a close neighbor of the Craigs on Crowder's Creek. When Mary Craig died in 1820 James Craig was a principal heir among his siblings and he was named as one of his mother's two executors.⁴ James Craig died on 21 April 1857 and was buried at Bethel Church. On 30 April 1857 the YORKVILLE ENQUIRER carried a brief note of his death: "At his residence in this District, suddenly, on the 21st instant, Mr. James Craig, in the 85th year of his age."

Meanwhile, on 25 May 1836, William Moore Craig married Margaret Isabella Neely (1813-1897), a daughter of John (1785-1865) and Cynthia (Starr) Neely (1789-1855). The couple established themselves in York County where the first two of their five sons were soon born: John Starr Craig on 14 March 1837; and James Porter Craig on 5 December 1838. The four comprised a single household recorded in the 1840 York County Census when Mr. Craig was listed as employed in agriculture. Three more children, all sons, were born to the couple in the 1840s: Robert Alexander Craig (1842-1861), Thomas Neely Craig (1847-1848), and William Newton Craig (1848-1919) who was born on 30 November 1848. When the 1850 Census was recorded in York County William Craig was the head of a household of six (including his wife and their four sons) and listed between those headed by James Craig, a laborer, and John Riddle, a farmer with real estate of \$200. William Craig was also a small farmer with real estate of \$300.

As one of six sons and eleven children, William Craig cannot have expected a significant inheritance on his father's death. James Craig died intestate and no record of the settlement of his

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estate survives in the York County public records. Whatever the circumstances, William Craig made the decision to settle his family in North Carolina. On 21 August 1852 he purchased a tract of 222 acres in lower Gaston County for \$640 from Moses H. Rhyne, the executor of his father Jacob Rhyne (Gaston Deeds, 1/586). The description of this acreage "Joining Warren & others" includes references to "Johnstons & Warrens Corner," an unnamed branch, and "the big road" which is believed to be Armstrong's Ford Road, a principal pathway between York, South Carolina, and Charlotte, North Carolina.⁵

Whether buildings stood on this property at the time of purchase is not now known; however, William Craig probably built the small one-story frame house (#2) and the log-and-frame barn (#8) shortly after acquiring his new farm. In the 1860 Gaston County, North Carolina, Census he is listed as the head of a household including his wife and their four sons with real estate valued at \$1,500 and personal property worth \$2,898. This valuation reflected his ownership of four slaves including a seventeen-year-old female and three children four years of age or younger.⁶

The effects of the Civil War on the life of the Craig family reflect the tenor of the time. Among the family papers held by the owners of the house are receipts for taxes paid in kind by William Craig in 1863-1865 with crops of wheat, oats, fodder, corn, and bacon. The Craigs' third son, Robert Alexander Craig, died on 29 December 1861. James Porter Craig (1838-1863), the couple's second son, died in the Battle of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. Their eldest son, John Starr Craig (1837-1906), was married to Jane Nolen (1849-1926) in the 1860s. Near the end of the decade the couple's youngest son made a marriage that would auger well for the family. On 4 March 1868 William Newton Craig married Emily Elmina Wilson (1846-1927), a daughter of Robert Moore Wilson (1802-1879), a prosperous Gaston County planter and money-lender. In the 1870 Census the young couple is recorded as living here with his parents in a household of five that includes their first-born child, a son Robert Porter Craig (1868-1944). Reflecting the post-war agricultural depression, the value of the farm was reduced to \$600 while Mr. Craig's personal property had fallen to \$500.

Births and deaths would also affect the family circle in the 1870s and 1880s and lead to improvements to the Craig farmstead. Between 1872 and 1889 five more children were born to William Newton and Emily Craig: Julia Franklin (1872-1920), William Neely (1876-1923), Carrie Wilson (1878-1954), Mary Edith (1882-195_), and Ralph Ray Craig (1889-1965). The couple's first five were born in the one-story house (#2); on 29 November 1889 Ralph Ray Craig was the first of the family to be born in their recently-completed Italianate farmhouse. The deaths of William Newton and Emily Craig's fathers in 1874 and 1879, respectively, resulted in their ownership of the home tract and the ability to erect a handsome new house in the mid 1880s.

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William Moore Craig died on 12 May 1874 and was buried in the cemetery of Union Presbyterian Church, about two miles to the northwest. The settlement of his estate was largely confined to the assignment of a dower to his widow and the division of his remaining lands between the two surviving sons. In three deeds dated 9 February 1875, Margaret Craig received a tract of 65 acres while each of her sons came into tracts of about 117 acres each (Gaston Deeds, 7/512-16).⁷ The only financial consideration specified in the deeds was that William Newton Craig would pay his brother John Starr Craig on the death of their mother the sum of \$100 which was defined as the difference in the valuation of their inheritances. The widow Craig continued to make her home with her youngest son and his family.

While the continued birth of children in the 1870s and the occupation of the two-room Craig house by members of three generations might have encouraged improved family quarters, it probably was the death of the young Mrs. Craig's father, Robert Moore Wilson, that provided them the means to both enlarge their farm acreage and build a new residence (#1). Mr. Wilson (1802-1879) died on 23 December 1879 and was buried at Bethel Presbyterian Church. His undated will was simple and short; he named his wife, Mary M. Wilson, as executor. He left his residence and sixty acres to Mrs. Wilson as a home for her and the couple's two then unmarried daughters, directed that his lands in both North and South Carolina be equally divided among his three sons, and bequeathed his notes and accounts in equal shares to his wife and four daughters. In his time and place Robert Wilson could be described as affluent. In the preliminary account submitted to court his estate was estimated at \$25,000.00, comprising "about Twelve Hundred acres of land about Nine thousand dollars in money and about Three Thousand Dollars in notes & accounts." Between 19 January 1880 and 29 May 1882 Mrs. Wilson paid a total of \$9,718.08 to her four daughters. Emily Craig received \$2,646.14.⁸

Enhancement of the Craig farmstead began within weeks of Mrs. Craig's receipt of \$2,000 on 19 January 1880 and continued through 1892. During those dozen years the farm acreage increased through both purchase and inheritance from the 117 acres William Newton Craig received on his father's death to at least 467 acres. And a handsome two-story, eight-room house was erected beside the family's two-room antebellum dwelling. On 30 January 1880 Robert Calvin Grier Love and his wife conveyed a tract of 162 acres adjoining the land bought in 1852 of Jacob Rhyne's estate, lying on the west side of Armstrong's Ford Road, and "known as a part of the Neely tract" for \$1,300 to William Newton Craig (Gaston Deeds, 9/572-73).⁹ On 6 April 1885 the Craigs received a tract of seventy five acres "on the waters of Mill Creek" in the division of the lands of Thomas H. Wilson (1851-1884), Mrs. Craig's bachelor brother (Gaston Deeds, 13/185-86). On 20 January 1890 Mr. Craig purchased two tracts, adjoining his farm and totaling eighty-three acres, from E. W. Mellon for \$600 (Gaston Deeds, 18/384-86). Next, in three separate transactions between 24 September 1891 and 19 March 1892 Mr. Craig acquired for

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\$300 the three undivided interests in a thirty-acre tract formerly the property of Mary McCalister and her daughter Cynthia (McCalister) Berry (Gaston Deeds, 19/555-58, 20/284-86).

About mid-way in this series of acquisitions, the Craigs decided to build a new house and turned to a well-known local house builder, Lawson Henderson Stowe, for the work. While a chronology of Mr. Stowe's work has yet to be established, the Craig house appears to be the second house erected for a daughter of Robert Moore Wilson with the benefit of her inheritance. In the early 1880s he had completed a handsome Italianate-style two-story house for Minerva Henrietta (Wilson) Ratchford (1844-1891) and her husband Rufus Alexander Ratchford (1849-1932). A "Bill of Lumber," dated 7 August 1886 and surviving in the Craig family's papers, lists the structural lumber, plank, flooring, ceiling, weatherboards, sheeting, and sixteen "columns" necessary to build the house. A second, undated invoice records the purchase of doors, windows, brackets, blinds, etc. from the Gastonia firm of Brumfield, Bradley & Company. The house was probably completed either late in 1886 or early 1887. The Craig family moved into the new house and on 29 November 1889 it was the birthplace of their last son, Ralph Ray Craig. The ca. 1852 house (#2) was then moved south to its present location and the kitchen building was moved to the north of the new house, where it stood until burning in 1955. Presumably Mr. Craig's mother, Margaret Isabella (Neely) Craig, moved with her son and his family into the new house and lived there until her death on 15 July 1897 and burial beside her husband at Union Presbyterian Church.

William Newton Craig continued his self-sufficient farming operations here until his death in 1919 and enjoyed the assistance of his youngest son Ralph Ray Craig who would remain a bachelor and at home with his parents well into his thirty-sixth year. During this period cotton was the principal cash crop and much of the acreage was farmed by tenants. Receipts survive and record the purchase of fertilizers, etc. The complement of farm outbuildings was enlarged by the addition of a frame barn (#7) beside the earlier barn (#8) around the turn of the twentieth century. The center-passage double-pen frame corn crib (#9) appears also to date to the turn of the century. The frame privy (#4) and the meat house (#5) are believed to date from the early-twentieth century. No doubt the antebellum house (#2) came to be used for storage and certain other domestic purposes.

William Newton Craig died on 20 October 1919 at the Gaston Sanatorium in Gastonia and was interred that afternoon at Union Church. In his obituary published in the GASTONIA GAZETTE, 20 October 1919, he was described as "one of the most prominent and highly respected citizens of the county" and "a man of considerable wealth and influence in his community, being one of the largest landowners in South Point township." Mr. Craig died intestate and his son Ralph Ray Craig served as administrator of his estate. Receipts comprised money on hand of \$279.04, "Proceeds of Crop" of \$2,295.42, and \$964.95 derived from the sale

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of personal property for a total of \$3,539.41. The principal disbursements were the wages of Thulbert, a farm hand, the costs of ginning and "bailing" cotton and other agricultural expenses. Mr. Craig's medical and hospitalization costs, surveying costs, attorney's fees, and the sum of \$600 expended on a gravestone from the Charlotte Marble and Granite Company. Mr. Craig equally distributed the sum of \$2,282.88 to his father's seven heirs.¹⁰

The distribution of Mr. Craig's real estate among his heirs was his administrator's most complicated task. To facilitate this work Ralph Ray Craig hired I. B. Faires to prepare plats of both the home tract and the Neely tract. These were produced in December 1919, and with the counsel of Gastonia Attorney A. C. Jones, 428.78 acres were set apart in six parcels. The Craig farmstead, including 141.20 acres of the 170.60-acre home tract, was conveyed jointly to Mr. Craig's widow and their son Ralph Ray Craig (Gaston Deed, 139/387-88). The remaining 29.40 acres of the home tract was sold by the heirs to John W. Groves, a son-in-law, for \$1,029 (Gaston Deeds, 139/380-81). A one-acre parcel was sold to T. S. Wright for \$50 (Gaston Deeds, 139/535-36). All eight deeds are dated 22 January 1920 (Gaston Deeds, 139/378-390, 535-36).

Ralph Ray Craig continued the farming practices of his father from the 1920s into the 1940s when he worked during World War II in a Burlington Industries plant in Cramerton. He and his mother lived alone in the family house until his marriage on 9 October 1926 to Grace Elizabeth Moore (1899-1963). Seven months later his mother, Emily Elmina (Wilson) Craig died on 10 May 1927 and was buried beside her husband. In her will, signed in 1920, she named Ralph Ray Craig as her sole heir and he thus came into full possession of the Craig farmstead and its acreage (Gaston Wills, 4/502). Ralph Ray and Grace Craig were the parents of four children born between 1927 and 1933: Mary Wilson Craig (1927-2000), William Neely Craig (b. 1928), Nellie Frances (Craig) Coward (b. 1929), and Ralph Ray Craig, Jr. (b. 1933). After his wartime stint in the textile factory, Mr. Craig returned to full-time farming. In the late 1940s Mrs. Craig began work at the Eagle plant of the Stowe textile operations at Belmont and she continued this work into the 1950s. Meanwhile, William Neely Craig joined his father in farming, on a part-time basis, and about 1951 they built the first of two poultry houses (#3) for their egg production and sales operation. A second house for laying hens (#6) was built about 1953.

The family's egg operation provided a new source of agricultural income on the Craig farm, and it was continued after Ralph Craig's death by his son until about 1967. It also was part of a larger transition in the character of farming operations in Gaston County and the state. While Ralph Ray Craig had turned to public work during World War II, in his fifties, largely because of a labor shortage in the factories producing goods for the war effort, his son, like so many others of his generation, turned to public work as his principal source of income with farming as a secondary, after hours and weekend pursuit. William Neely Craig had studied at Belmont Abbey College, worked briefly at Ware Hardware Company in Gastonia, and in 1951 he began a career

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with Sunrise Dairy, a milk processing company in Gastonia, that continued to 1974. In July 1952 Mr. Craig married Wilma Rebecca Ratchford (b. 1930), a daughter of Forest Crown and Mattie (Best) Ratchford and a graduate of Flora MacDonald College. Beginning with the winter term 1952 she started on a thirty-three-and-a-half-year tenure as a teacher in the Gaston County public schools. In 1953 Ralph Ray and Grace Craig conveyed the first of two small lots in the near center of the farm and on the south and north sides, respectively, of Union New Hope Road to William Neely and Wilma Craig on which they built and occupied successive houses (Gaston Deeds, 614/215 and 858/166). These conveyances in 1953 and 1964, totaling 2.40 acres, were the first—and only—decreases in the home-tract acreage since 1926 when Ralph Craig and his mother sold a 2.15-acre tract at the northeast edge of the farm (Gaston Deeds, 208/440). The sale in 1964 also reflected changes in operations on the farm. William and Wilma Craig erected a one-story brick ranch house on the 1964 lot and undertook the creation of a second center of farm operations adjoining their new house.

Meanwhile, in 1960, Mary Wilson Craig returned to the farm to live with her aging parents after a period of some three years in Greensboro working as a beautician. She was living here when Grace Moore Craig died in 1963 and in 1965 when Ralph Ray Craig, Sr. died in December 1965. Ralph Craig bequeathed all his property in equal shares to his four children and named William Neely Craig as his executor (Gaston Estate Records, #1024, Accounts, 25/53, and Settlements, 18/104). A final sum of \$7,523 was distributed to the four (Gaston County Record of Settlements, 18/104-06). A plat of the Ralph Ray Craig estate was prepared by the engineering and surveying firm of Robinson and Sawyer of Gastonia (Gaston County Plats, 21/39). The estate's 161.76 acres were divided into six tracts and conveyed on 13 January 1967 to the four children (Gaston Deeds, 940/30, 32-34). The residual house tract of 20.02 acres became the property of Mary Wilson Craig (Gaston Deeds, 940/32).¹¹

Mary Wilson Craig occupied the family's Italianate-style farmhouse alone from her father's death in December 1965 until going to a retirement/assisted living facility in June 1998.¹² She died in 2000. During this period the little used outbuildings began a general decline. In 1990 she sold a rectangular tract of 4.85 acres (now calculated at 4.71 acres) along the east side of the house tract to William and Wilma Craig so they could own access to their land-locked acreage behind the home tract (Gaston Deeds, 2022/974). In February 1993 Mary Craig conveyed the remaining, residual farmstead acreage in undivided one-half interests to her brother William and her sister Nell and their spouses (Gaston Deeds, 2246/491-92). In March 1995 William and Wilma Craig and Nell and Reid Coward agreed to an equal division of the acreage. The east half (7.63 acres, recalculated to 7.32 acres), including the site of the family's two houses and all its then standing outbuildings, became the property of William and Wilma Craig (Gaston Deeds, 2448/321-23). The west half (7.63 acres recalculated to 7.17 acres) of the property, comprising

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mostly pasture and some woodland, became the property of the Cowards (Gaston Deeds, 2448/324-26). In 1996 the Cowards conveyed ownership of this parcel to Mrs. Nell Coward.

The Craigs and Mrs. Coward continue to own their respective portions of the home tract. In 2000 the Craig farmstead was used as the principal setting of a made-for-television movie, "The Last Brickmaker in America," produced by Brick Maker, Incorporated, and Joseph and Jack Nasser. It was aired in fall 2001. During filming the company erected a shed (#10) in the pasture. In recent years the Craig house (#1) has been well-maintained by its owners with somewhat less attention given to the outbuildings. In 2005 the roofs of the two Craig houses (#1-2), the meat/well house (#5), and the corn crib (#9) were painted. In May 2005 carpenter-builder Allen J. Reese undertook work on the log-and-frame barn (#8). The entire surviving frame portion of the deteriorated building was removed. He then stabilized the center log substructure of the barn and is now engaged in building a frame peripheral shed.

Architectural Significance

The local significance of the Craig Farmstead in the area of architecture has a two-part distinction reflecting the individual importance of the William Neely Craig house as an intact well-preserved example of the work of house builder Lawson Henderson Stowe, and the collective significance of the house together with the family's earlier dwelling, and the log and frame buildings, as an important surviving Gaston County farmstead. Built in 1886 the William Neely Craig House is one of a small number of houses in South Point Township known to have been built by Mr. Stowe, who enjoyed a reputation for successfully grafting the bracketed Italianate style onto the traditional two-story, three-bay Piedmont farmhouse. When completed and occupied by the family, who moved into it from their adjoining antebellum house, the new residence became the seat of a farm which dates from 1852 and includes a group of outbuildings on an important farmstead that was the home of four generations (1852-1965) of resident farmers.

When William Newton Craig considered building his new house in the mid 1880s, his decision to employ Lawson Henderson Stowe for the work was an obvious choice. Mr. Stowe was the most respected house builder in South Point Township, and some years before he had erected a handsome bracketed Italianate house for Mrs. Craig's elder sister Minerva and her husband Rufus Alexander Ratchford. That house stood, and remains, about a mile to the southeast. Mr. Stowe has also been identified as the builder of a surviving house, whose date is unconfirmed, for Mrs. Craig's younger brother, James Laban Wilson (1853-1907). Lawson Stowe was a well-regarded builder in his day and he remains today the best known carpenter/builder working principally in rural Gaston County in the later nineteenth century. As such he is one of the

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relatively few builders, among the many who built thousands of similar farmhouses throughout North Carolina, who can be specifically identified with surviving houses.

The principal account of the life and career of Mr. Stowe appears in THE STOWE FAMILY: DESCENDANTS OF WILLIAM AND MARY STOWE FROM VIRGINIA TO NORTH CAROLINA, 1718-1976, written by Rachel Stowe Hanna Hoke and published in 1977.¹³

Lawson Henderson Stowe (1848-1922) was born 7 August 1848, the fourth of seven sons born to Abraham Stowe, Jr., (1801-1880) and his second wife Mary Jane Buchanan (1821-1908). He grew up on his father's farm in the New Hope Presbyterian Church community in Gaston County's South Point Township. With the death of his three older brothers and a half-brother (of his father's first marriage) within the space of two years (1861-63) during the Civil War, he gained an unexpected status in the family at the age of fifteen as the oldest surviving son. He was married to Fannie E. Smith (1848-1887) in 1867 with whom he had twelve children born between 1868 and 1885; eight of the twelve lived to adulthood. His second marriage to Mary Elizabeth Sanford (1872-1947) produced five daughters between 1896 and 1909.

Lawson Stowe's career as a builder is recounted in a memoir written by Samuel Newton Craig (b. 1908), a grandson, and published in Mrs. Hoke's book. As a boy he is said to have learned the rudiments of building from his father. "He helped his father to make boards for roofing shingles, cut logs for outbuildings, and helped to erect them" (Hoke, 118-19). Mr. Craig does not state when Lawson Stowe began his work as a house builder or when it ended; however, a review of the buildings known to be by his hand or attributed to him suggests he began building in the 1870s and continued into the early to mid 1910s. In the 1870 Gaston County Census he gave farming as his occupation. In the 1880 Gaston County Census he is listed as carpenter. After giving up carpentry he relocated with his wife and daughters to Gastonia's Groves (later Flint #1) Mill village where he operated a store. When he died on 25 February 1922, his career as a builder was in the past and he was identified as a "Store-keeper" in his own grocery.

As noted in Mr. Craig's account, Lawson Stowe's buildings generally form into two groups: the farmhouses he erected for neighbors who lived on or near New Hope Road in South Point Township in lower Gaston County; and houses built in Belmont where his kinsmen were leaders in the rapidly expanding textile industry.

On the New Hope Road, he built several nice homes, including the Rosa McLean house, the Doctor William McLean house, which is now known as the Dan Stowe Farm House, the Henry Elmore house, the home of Mrs. Jesse Ratchford, and the old Suggs home place, later occupied by Tom Glover. There are many others in this section that he built (Hoke, 119).

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Several of these houses were recorded by Kim Withers Brengle during the Gaston County survey and published in 1982 in her compendium *THE ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE OF GASTON COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA*.

Among the unnamed “many others in this section” were the Rufus Alexander Ratchford House, the John Davidson Brevard McLean House, the James Laban Wilson House, and this house built in 1886 for William Newton Craig. Ms. Brengle recorded these last four houses as well as the “Rosa McLean house” that was actually built for her husband William Speight McLean (1859-1898) and the Henry Elmore house (Brengle, 239-40, 244-45, 249).¹⁴

Although no known chronology exists for the construction of these houses, they share a remarkable cohesiveness in their scale, design, and the quality and character of the Italianate brackets and other decorative woodwork that enriches their eaves, porches, door and window surrounds, and interiors. The architectural personality of his houses derives in part from Mr. Stowe’s skills and sensibilities as a builder and from the fact that he patronized local mills for both the structural lumber for his houses and the doors, windows, blinds, brackets, turned posts, mantels, and moldings produced by sash, door, and blind manufacturers such as Gastonia’s Brumfield, Bradley & Company which provided the finish work for the Craig house. All have two-story single-pile, center/stair-hall plan, main blocks flanked by brick gable end chimneys, and one-story ells except for the one-story Suggs house and the Ratchford and Craig houses that have two-story ells. While some have suffered alteration and others deterioration, the Ratchford and Craig houses are the largest and most impressive of the group. And of the two the Craig house is arguably the most intact and least-altered of the pair: its only notable changes have been the enclosure of a bathroom on its rear service porch in 1942 and the addition of aluminum siding in the 1960s.¹⁵ Its entire complement of decorative Italianate finish survives on both the exterior and interior.

Whatever values might be assigned to the effects of exterior and interior changes, additions, and sidings through time, the Craig house stands as a remarkably well preserved example of Lawson Stowe’s skills as a house builder. It also remains an important intact member of the larger group of Italianate farmhouses in Gaston County that were the last significant, identifiable group of farm seats erected in a county that was making a rapid turn to industrialization with the countywide development of textile mills.¹⁶

The houses Lawson Henderson Stowe built in Belmont are generally later in date than his Italianate-style farmhouses and reflect the profits being generated in the region’s textile mills. The earliest of the three known to survive, the house built for James Pinckney Stowe (1845-1916) about 1891, was relocated when the Belmont post office was built on its site in 1938 and later refitted as an apartment house (Brengle, 268). The handsome houses Mr. Stowe built about

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1910 for DeLambert Pinckney Stowe (1888-1953) and Abel Caleb Lineberger, Sr. (1859-1948), both leaders in the textile industry, have survived with a high degree of preservation. The design of these houses, unlike the Italianate farmhouses whose decorative finish and detailing largely owed to Lawson Stowe's choices and recommendations to clients, is attributed to Charlotte architect Charles Christian Hook (Brengele, 262, 268).¹⁷ Mr. Stowe is also said to have built houses in Lowell, and others in Mount Holly including a residence for his son Thomas Jarvis Stowe (1880-1959).

This last-noted status of the William Newton Craig house is associated with the Craig Farmstead's second area of local architectural significance: its importance as a representative example of a surviving nineteenth and early twentieth century farm complex. The number, scale, character, and arrangement of domestic and agricultural outbuildings on any farm in the western Piedmont and here, Gaston County, varied according to the size and prosperity of the farm and the enterprise of its owner. Larger, older (eighteenth century) farms and those dating from the early-nineteenth century usually consisted of a log or frame residence and a log barn as the anchors of the domestic and agricultural areas of farm life. Kitchen buildings, smoke/meat houses, spring houses, and occasionally weaving houses stood in close proximity to the dwelling while log cribs and occasionally a log granary formed part of the work area with pastures and holding pens surrounding the barn. Often a lane or path connected these core groupings on the farm acreage. Slave houses, usually of logs, generally stood somewhat apart but within view of the owner's house.

Through the course of the nineteenth century, as the number of sawmills increased and their ability to easily and inexpensively produce sawn lumber grew, farmers increasingly abandoned log construction in favor of frame construction when adding or replacing buildings on existing complexes. However, on farm complexes newly-created in the mid-nineteenth century, the principal barn sometimes continued to be built wholly or partially of logs even when the house was hewn or sawn frame. In the post-bellum period, and into the 1870s, Piedmont farmers erected relatively few outbuildings and made do with those standing. When the agricultural economy picked up, in the later 1870s and 1880s virtually all rural building utilized frame construction except for the occasional brick house, like the bracketed Paysour-Black-Beam house in Gaston's Cherryville Township (Brengele, 56), or brick outbuilding, like the brick meat/well-house at the ancestral Hoyle House (NR, 1993). Frame construction predominated through the turn of the twentieth century and into the 1910s and 1920s.

This pattern held true throughout Gaston County and here on the Craig Farm. When settling his family on newly-acquired acreage in 1852 William Craig erected a frame house (#1) and soon built a substantial log (single-pen)-and-frame barn (#8). William Craig's one-story house was a departure from the usual two-story houses erected on Piedmont farms in the antebellum period as

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exemplified by the Frederick Carpenter and Francis Thompson houses (Brengle, 11, 50, 109) in Gaston County. It is unclear to what extent it represents an individual exception to the conventional two-story form, or whether it might be a rare surviving example of smaller, more-modest houses erected on smallish farm acreages. A complete understanding of the house and its original appearance is also complicated by the uncertainty as to whether the surviving one-story, single-pile, two-room block represents the family's entire living quarters, together with the kitchen, which was also moved in 1886 to a different site on the grounds and is long lost, and porches. Or, whether this surviving block represents the core onto which ells or other additions were made, as needed, but which were demolished and not moved with this two-room section. Whatever the case, the intact interior sheathing and finish of the two-room block is typical of the period. Related issues of uniqueness and convention also apply to the log-and-frame barn. So few log or log-and-frame barns survive in the county--and none of them are dated with absolute specificity--that formal conclusions are virtually impossible to draw beyond the framework of regional patterns for agricultural outbuildings. Only one known log barn is fully illustrated in Brengle's published survey, and it stands with a house said to have been built by a Civil War veteran, Hugh Torrence, immediately after the war (Brengle, 11, 83). Whether the Dellinger barn (Brengle, 60) is log or frame is unclear from the text (Brengle, 51) or the photograph which shows the large center-passage barn with weatherboard sheathing. (It was not investigated for this project.) But again, the log-and-frame barn, like the antebellum Craig house, survives as an example of local building practice that can be studied and better resolved in the future.

The Craig house and barn were linked by a path. Family tradition does not recount the existence of a log meat house, crib, or other original antebellum outbuildings on its self-sufficient farm whose acreage does not appear to have increased until 1880. The construction date of a long-lost log blacksmith shop is not known.

In the 1880s when both the fortunes of the family and its farm acreage increased, the second generation of buildings erected here were all of frame construction. The major improvement was the Italianate-style two-story farmhouse (#1) erected in 1886 by Lawson Henderson Stowe about seventy-five feet north of the antebellum house. It stood, and continues to stand, as one of the most impressive examples of a rural building boom in the 1880s and early 1890s that represents the swansong of agriculture in a rapidly industrializing county. The family's earlier residence effectively became a domestic outbuilding. When need arose for larger agricultural facilities around the turn of the twentieth century, a new frame center-passage barn (#7) was built beside the earlier barn. About the same time, Mr. Craig erected a center-passage/double pen frame corn crib (#9). The farm's two last-built historic outbuildings, the privy (#4) and meat/well-house (#5) date to the first years of the twentieth century and are also weatherboarded frame buildings. While questions remain concerning the place of Mr. Craig's log-and-frame barn (#8) in the history of log outbuilding construction in nineteenth-century Gaston County, the frame

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outbuildings (#4-5, 7, 9) erected by William Newton Craig all fit into the conventional building patterns of the period. The center-passage frame barn, with stables to either side and haylofts above, was one of the most frequently built farm outbuildings in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century Piedmont. The double-pen frame corn crib, with cribs flanking a center passage that was often used for wagon storage, was another. On the domestic side, the combination of meat houses (for salt- and sugar-cured meats) and well houses into a single structure, as here, was also a convention of the turn of the century throughout much of North Carolina. Here, as on most farms, the privy was simply built, with weatherboard sides and a shed roof; however, this survival is a remarkably rare instance in Gaston County

In addition to these surviving buildings four others stood on the farmstead acreage into the twentieth century: a log blacksmith shop which collapsed in the 1940s, a frame combination granary/carriage house torn down in the 1930s, the antebellum frame kitchen that had been moved to a site about seventy feet north of the 1886 house and was lost to fire in 1955, and a small one-story frame tenant house that was lost to fire in September 1960. These buildings, except the tenant house, housed all of the family's domestic and agricultural operations until the early 1950s and the erection of two frame houses for laying hens and the family's egg sales operation..

The pattern of rural building had persisted in Gaston County through the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and the Craig Farmstead fits within its known conventions; however, the rapid, pervasive industrialization of Gaston County forever altered the once agrarian life of its citizens and the survival of the buildings that housed its society. In 1848, two years after Gaston's formation from Lincoln County in 1846, the path toward its becoming a textile giant was paved with the opening of Mountain Island Mill. Between 1848 and 1950 more than 150 textile mills were placed in operation in Gaston County, a number larger than that of any other county in the United States, and Gaston County came to be "the combed yarn capital of the world." The history of this phenomenal, unprecedented development in North Carolina, and the creation of a network of family held mills, their adjoining mill villages, related facilities, and mill-controlled towns such as McAdenville, has been well and often told. The National Register nominations for the Belmont Historic District (1996), the Belmont Hosiery Mill (2002), the Loray Mill Historic District (2001), and the Mount Holly Cotton Mill (1996), represent important aspects of the county's industrial history.

The effects of this intensive industrialization upon the agrarian society, of largely Scotch-Irish and German ancestry, that formed the citizenry of an area that was successively a part of Anson County (after 1750), Mecklenburg County (after 1762), Tryon County (after 1768), and Lincoln County (after 1779), until the formation of Gaston County in 1846 has been understudied. But therein lies the context in which the Craig Farmstead holds a place of historic importance in

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Gaston County. Between 1976 and 1998 four important rural dwellings dating from the late eighteenth century to the 1830s were listed in the National Register (and none since); of this group only the Hoyle House (NR, 1993) retained any of its outbuildings. Its nineteenth-century brick meat/well-house and a frame nineteenth-century building of uncertain origins and use survive near the house. And as of this nomination no rural residence dating after the 1830s in what is now Gaston County has been nominated to the National Register.

This could be said to reflect an inattention to this critical part of the county's history, but it also reflects larger, more visible historical realities. In the late 1970s when Kim Withers Brengle began the architectural survey of Gaston County (under the supervision of this author who was then on the staff of the State Historic Preservation Office), the processes of industrialization had been in effect for some 130 years. During that long period, and particularly in the first half of the twentieth century, enterprising sons and daughters of Gaston County had found steady, guaranteed employment in the mills in every capacity from entrepreneur/owner to the lowest paid factory worker. The result was that both farms and farming as a way of life were increasingly abandoned and so, too, were the buildings that once housed Gaston's farmers, their livestock, and their crops. While the textile industry and its buildings deserved their place of prominence in the survey and subsequent publication, the larger fact, which remains, is that much of the rural architectural fabric of the county had been lost. And that loss accelerated in the quarter century since she effectively completed her fieldwork in 1980. Many buildings have been lost and the integrity of others compromised during insensitive remodelings.

The Craig Farmstead, with its small group of log and frame buildings reflecting the entire history of farming at this location since 1852, would have been important in the county's architectural history; but with the loss of so many older and contemporary buildings its significance becomes ever more visible. Even as recently as the field work of Ms. Brengle's survey, the number of important Gaston County farmhouses with one or more identifiably historic outbuildings was small, about three dozen. Of this group the majority were in western and northern Gaston County, in Cherryville, Crowder's Mountain, and Dallas townships, at some remove from the center of textile development in the east central part of the county along the corridor stretching west from Belmont, through Cramerton, McAdenville, and Lowell, to Gastonia, the functional heart of the industry (Brengle, 50-52, 54-55, 58, 80, 83-84, 104, 110). Smaller numbers were identified in Gastonia Township, in Riverbend township in the northeast corner of the county, and here in South Point Township in the southeast part of Gaston (Brengle, 140, 205, 208, 237, 239, 242, and 247).

In recent years the Gaston County preservation community has recognized the steady disappearance of buildings which once comprised so visible a part of its countryside. The Schiele Museum moved a log building onto its grounds in Gastonia for interpretative purposes. In the

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1990s a cooperative effort between the Gaston County Historic Preservation Commission and the county parks system saw the relocation of a threatened log dwelling from Crowder's Mountain State Park and the single-pen log barn at the White family farm, also threatened as was its now-lost log house (Brengele 110), to the county-owned Biggerstaff Park near Dallas. The White family's barn was moved to the park in the summer of 1996. In September 1996 a single-pen log barn was relocated from the Gaston place near Lowell to the grounds of the ancestral Hoyle House (NR) where it is being stabilized and restored. While these efforts preserve individual components of the county's architectural fabric, they are, nevertheless, isolated preservations and recreations of what once was. The Craig Farmstead, with its in situ dwellings and outbuildings, remains one of the rare, steadily diminishing number of farm complexes in Gaston County where the relationships of buildings to the land and to each other is preserved and it reflects a visible tangible part of the county's architectural history.

ENDNOTES

1. Located about three and one-quarter miles south of the North Carolina/South Carolina state line, Bethel Presbyterian Church emerged as a center of religious and civic life in the community of mostly Scotch-Irish Presbyterian immigrants who settled in this vicinity in the eighteenth century along the streams feeding into the Catawba River. This fertile area had earlier been a part of the tribal lands of the Catawba Indians whose presence here is remembered in the name of the river. At the time of its initial settlement in the Colonial period much of this area, now a part of South Carolina, was in North Carolina and, successively, comprised a part of Anson County after 1750 and Mecklenburg County which was formed from Anson County in 1762. After extended boundary disputes between the two states, a new line was run in 1772 from the forks of the Catawba River westward to the Cherokee boundary. This new line remains intact today. Until 1785 this new part of South Carolina was known as the "New Acquisition." In that year the section lying between the Catawba River on the east and the Broad River on the west was set apart as York County while the area on the west side of the Broad River became Spartanburg County. For a full account of this matter see Marvin Lucian Skaggs, NORTH CAROLINA BOUNDARY DISPUTES INVOLVING HER SOUTHERN LINE, published in 1941 by the University of North Carolina Press as Volume 25, Number 1 of the James Sprunt Studies in History and Political Science.
2. The information on the Craig and Wilson families included in this nomination is based on compiled genealogies of branches of those families prepared by Wilma (Ratchford) Craig and made available to this author.

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3. York County Wills, Book A, pages 175-177. Historical Center of York County, York, South Carolina.
 4. Brent H. Holcomb, YORK COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA, WILL ABSTRACTS, 1787-1862 (1770-1862) (Columbia, SC: SCMAR, 2002), 133.
 5. This is the only land purchase made by William Craig that appears in either the Lincoln County or Gaston County deed indexes. Moses H. Rhyne (1812-1888), a successful merchant, was also one of the founders of Gaston County's textile industry. See Brengle, pp. 120, 246.
 6. In the Gaston County Slave Schedule, listed on 18 July 1860 by H. F. White, William Craig is listed between John F. Glenn who owned one slave and John Neely who owned nine slaves. The largest slaveholder in the immediate neighborhood was Dr. John D. McLean who owned thirty-three slaves.
 7. There is no ready explanation for the difference in acreage between the tract William Craig received in 1852 containing "by estimation Two hundred and twenty two acres more or less it being part of diferent (sic) tracts as may appear . . ." and the 299 acres conveyed to his widow and two sons in the settlement of his estate. It is possible that the acreage conveyed in 1852 was widely underestimated or Mr. or Mrs. Craig came into acreage through inheritance, hence no deed would have been recorded, or they purchased land for which no deed was recorded.
 8. Robert M. Wilson Estate Record, Gaston County Estates Records, North Carolina State Archives. In the record of cash, accounts, and notes filed with the court, Mrs. Wilson listed \$9,940.03 as "Cash on hand at death of Testator," a remarkably large sum for the time. The largest note was a loan of \$1,111.00 made to Caleb John Lineberger (1818-1914), the founder of a Gaston County textile dynasty, as president of Lawrence Manufacturing Company. That note and a second note on Mr. Lineberger and his son Abel Caleb Lineberger were paid with interest. In the settlement the four daughters were each paid slightly different amounts.
 9. Mr. Love (1840-1907) was married to Susan Rhyne, a daughter of Moses H. Rhyne.
 10. William Newton Craig Estate Record, Gaston County Estates Records, North Carolina State Archives. The receipts were incorrectly totaled as \$3,538.41 in the documents submitted to the court. I. B. Faires was paid \$50 for surveying the Craig lands; he was assisted by Mr. Craig's son-in-law James Barnett Bigger who was paid \$16.00. The estate

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- paid \$3.00 to _____ Abernathy for crying the sale of personal property; however, the expected account of the sale is missing from the estate record. It would have provided insight into the crops, livestock, farming equipment and implements, etc. here.
11. The discrepancy between the acreage of the tract Ralph Ray Craig received in the division of his father's estate (141.20 acres) and that distributed at his death (161.76 acres) has not been researched. Possibly, the 29.40-acre portion of the home tract sold to John W. Groves came back into Mr. Craig's ownership. The acreage of the three lots conveyed in 1926, 1953, and 1964 (4.55 acres) and the residual acreage (161.76) being 166.31 acres is relatively close to the 170.60-acre "home tract" surveyed by Mr. Faires.
 12. During this period Miss Craig, successively, operated her own beauty shop in Gastonia, worked in area sewing plants, enrolled in a nursing assistance course, and worked as a nurse companion in the homes of the aged and infirm.
 13. Rachel Stowe Hanna (b. 1924) is a great-granddaughter of Lawson Henderson Stowe.
 14. The Henry Elmore house, the home of Henry Rufus Elmore, a Civil War veteran, prosperous farmer, and trustee of Bethesda Methodist Church, appears as entry #323 "House" on page 240. The "Suggs home place" is a one-story turn-of-the-century frame cottage that was subsequently remodeled. It stands near the Elmore house on New Hope Road.
 15. During the recent renovation of the Ratchford house it was covered with vinyl siding. The extent of interior changes was not examined for this nomination.
 16. Lawson Stowe's last known building project in the New Hope Road area was the handsome frame church he erected for the Bethesda Methodist congregation in 1913. Its gable front elevation, with a central entrance, was flanked by paired, multi-stage corner towers, and the weatherboarded elevations enlivened with lancet arch window openings. It was replaced by the congregation with another church building in the 1960s. A photograph of the church appears in GASTON COUNTY HERITAGE, VOLUME 1-2002, page 222. The church stood at Elmore's Crossroads on the New Hope Road, near the home of Henry Rufus Elmore. Mr. Stowe also remodeled the frame New Hope Presbyterian Church which was also replaced by a newer building. He is buried in the New Hope Church cemetery.

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17. Both the DeLambert Pinckney Stowe House (28 West Woodrow Avenue) and the Abel Caleb Lineberger House I (203 North Main Street) are contributing resources in the Belmont Historic District (NR, 1996).

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The nominated acreage (19.20 acres) encompasses the rectangular tract conveyed on 13 January 1967 to Mary Wilson Craig (Gaston County Deeds, 940/32) which now comprises three Gaston County tax parcels: #192498 (7.32 acres), #192505 (4.71 acres), and #192507 (7.17 acres).

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The nominated acreage comprises the 20.02-acre tract (recalculated to 19.20 acres) that was set apart as the home place in the division of the Ralph Ray Craig, Sr., estate and conveyed on 13 January 1967 to Mary Wilson Craig by her siblings. This tract includes the site and appropriate setting of all the historic resources comprising the Craig Farmstead, and is held in three parcels by the late Miss Craig's siblings, William Neely Craig and Nell Craig Coward, and their spouses, Wilma Ratchford Craig and Reid Carr Coward. The "recalculated" acreages cited herein are those listed by the Gaston County Tax Department and based on its GIS mapping.

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Photograph Schedule

1. Name of Property: Craig Farmstead
2. Location: Gaston County, North Carolina
3. Name of photographer: Davyd Foard Hood
4. Dates of photographs: 29 November, 6 December, 2003; 14 September 2005 (#L)
5. Location of original negatives: North Carolina Division of Archives and History, Raleigh,
North Carolina

Views

- A. Overall view of farmstead, looking northwest to William Newton Craig House (#1) with William Moore Craig House (#2) on left and corner of poultry house (#6) on right.
- B. William Moore Craig House (#2), looking southeast.
- C. William Newton Craig House (#1), looking south/southeast.
- D. William Newton Craig House (#1), northwest corner of front porch, looking southeast.
- E. William Newton Craig House (#1), looking south to rear porches and ell.
- F. William Newton Craig House (#1), first-story stair newel, looking southeast.
- G. William Newton Craig House (#1), east elevation of the dining room, looking east.
- H. William Newton Craig House (#1), north elevation with mantel in north second-story bedroom, looking north.
- I. Privy (#4), looking south.
- J. Meat/well-house (#5), looking southeast with barn (#7) in background.

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- K. Farm lane linking William Moore Craig House (#2), left rear center, and log-and-frame barn (#8). North gable end of poultry house (#6) on extreme left, and southwest corner of meat/well-house (#5) at right edge, looking west.
- L. Log-and-frame barn (#8), with east end of barn (#7) on right, looking south/southeast.
- M. Corn crib (#9), looking north.